(b) if so, the names of the principal foreign countries to which India's exports had gone up during the last three years;

(c) whether any comprehensive action paln has been drawn up during the current financial year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof including the targets to be achieved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The principal countries to which our exports have gone up include USA, Japan, UK, Germany, Hongkong, UAE, Belgium, Russia, Bangladesh, Italy, Singapore, Nethrlands and France.

(c) and (d) An 18—20% growth in dollar terms is projected during the current year under a focussed strategy of addressing select markets and select products besides exploring new opportunities and emerging markets.

Shortage of Pig Iron in Gujarat

*519. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the shortage of pig iron in Gujarat State has led to crisis in foundries there;

(b) the requirements of pig iron for foundries in Gujarat State;

(c) the allocation made by Government so far; and

(d) the steps taken by Government for allocation of more quantity of pig iron to the State for smooth functioning of the Industry?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHAYA): (a) No report has been received regarding shortage of pig iron in Gujarat State at present.

(b) and (c) For meeting the requirements of pig iron for Small Scale Industries (including foundries) in the various States, allocations are made by the Development Commissioner for Iron and Steel (DCI&S) to the Small Scale Industries Corporation of the State concerned, keeping in view its demand, past offtake and availability of pig iron from the main producers. The allocations made by the DCI&S to Gujarat Small Industries Corporation (GSIC) for distribution to Small Scale Units in Gujarat and actual offtake against this allocation during the last 3 years was as under:

	In lakh tonnes	
	Allocation	Offtake
1993-94	1.29	0.60
1994-95	1.40	0.59
1995-96	0.80	0.02

Allocation to GSIC for 1996-97 (April '96 — September '96) is 40,000 tonnes. Apart from supplies made through the Small Industries Corporation, the consumer industries also take pig iron directly from main producers. Besides the main producers, pig iron is also supplied directly by the secondary producers.

(d) As per the information available from Government of Gujarat, availability of pig iron in Gujarat, at present, is adequate. In order to augment the supply further, allocation made by the Development Commissioner for Iron & Steel can be increased, if required.

Assessment of Gold Deposits in Karnataka

*520. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether fresh deposits of gold have been detected in Chitradurga and Sandur districts of Karnataka;

(b) the details of these deposits indicating the extent of the gold reserves; and

(c) the steps taken to fully assess and explore the deposits?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) Geological Survey of India has established a small gold deposit and located a few gold prospects in Chitradurga district, Karnataka in recent years, but not gold prospect has been found in Sandur district so far by GSI.

(b) The gold deposit has been established in G.R. Halli, South Block. The prospects located in Chitradurga District are Chikkanahali, Gonur Kotomaradi, M.N. Halli, Kunchiganahalu and Honnemaradi. In South Block of G.R. Halli estimated gold ore reserves are of the order of 0.6 million tonnes of 4 gm/tonne. Developmental mining is being carried out by Huti Gold Mines Ltd.

(c) The exploration through drilling and pitting and trenching, geochemical and geophysical methods is continuing to identify the probable reserves and grade of gold ore.

Posts reserved for SC/ST/OBC

3331. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the reserved posts meant for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward communities have been filled up during the last 3 years in the Ministry of Industry;

(b) whether any backlog of posts reserved for them remains still unfilled;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which the backlog of posts reserved for them is expected to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Requisition for nominating candidates to these posts has been sent to Department of Personnel and Training. Nominations of qualified candidates are still awaited from them.

(d) The backlog vacancies shall be cleared as and when eligible candidates are nominated by the Department of Personnel and Training.

Revamped Public Distribution System in Manipur

3332. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that out of thirty two blocks in the State of Manipur only twenty two have received the Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS); and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and how soon will these be covered?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Only 22 blocks of Manipur are covered under Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS). At present there is no proposal to extend the RPDS areas.

Foreign Exchange earned by Tobacco Products

3333. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of foreign exchange earned by different tobacco products during the last four years;

(b) the break-up thereof year-wise and product-wise;